

## **GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF**

### Ethics Commission Exemption for “Class Gifts” to Teachers

Under MGL c. 268A, public school teachers (and other public employees) are generally prohibited from accepting gifts valued at fifty dollars or more, unless that gift falls within certain exemptions. The State Ethics Commission recently created a new exemption for “class gifts” whereby a public school teacher may accept a class gift up to one hundred fifty dollars in value if a group of students and/or parents wish to pool their contributions towards a gift.

A class gift removes the possible conflict of interest inherent in gifts as the teacher will have no knowledge of the individual amounts contributed or by whom. For this reason, it is not necessary for the teacher to disclose a class gift to the appointing authority as would be required by the Code of Massachusetts Regulations for many gifts from individual students/parents. In addition to a class gift, the teacher may also accept a gift from an individual student or parent who did not contribute to the class gift; however, the teacher may need to disclose the individual gift. No gift – of ANY value – may be accepted in exchange for showing of favoritism toward a particular student.

### Solicitations

In spirit, the School Committee supports the many worthwhile charitable drives that take place in the community and is gratified when school employees give them their support. However, the solicitation of funds from staff members through the use of school personnel and school time must be held at a minimum. Therefore, no solicitations of funds for charitable purposes will be made among staff members except with specific School Committee approval. Whenever such solicitations are made, no pressure will be exerted to obtain contributions even though the drive is one that the School Committee has specifically approved.

Adopted: September 8, 1997

Revised: September 16, 2013

Revised: June 2, 2014